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ABSTRACT

The paper provides guidelines for establishing and operating teacher aide programs in special education. Chapter I considers legal aspects of using paraprofessionals with emphasis on the stance of the Nebraska Professional Practices Commission. A second chapter outlines the roles and duties of teachers and aides, offers sample job descriptions for teacher aides, and describes guidelines for effective team relationships. A final chapter discusses the special education paraprofessional program in terms of administration, training, supervision, and evaluation of personnel. It is concluded that paraprofessionals play an important role by providing an opportunity for differentiated staffing and thereby enabling more productive and efficient use of professionals. Appended are evaluation instruments and check lists and sample records keeping forms. (SW)

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GUIDE FOR EFFECTIVE UTILIZATION OF PARAPROFESSIONALS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

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GUIDE FOR EFFECTIVE UTILIZATION OF PARAPROFESSIONALS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

The utilization of paraprofessionals serves as an attractive alternative for the delivery of services to handicapped children. Increasing costs of programming, shortages of qualified personnel in rural areas, and the need for more individualized programming have contributed to greater utilization of paraprofessionals in special education programs. Yet the aim of the paraprofessional program is greater than just reduced cost. More importantly, it is to improve the quality of education for handicapped students.

The paraprofessional program provides:

. . . additional positive role models for handicapped students;
. . . increased student learning opportunities;
. . . more individualized instruction;
. . . more individual attention to students;
. . . additional teacher time for planning, instruction, and evaluation;
. . . greater consistency in delivery of instruction; and
. . . better monitoring and evaluation of student educational process.

Some corollary benefits to special education programs which are not directly observable include:

. . . improved pupil self-concept;
. . . increased positive pupil attitudes toward learning and school;
. . . increased appropriate student behaviors in the classroom;
. . . improved teacher morale;
. . . improved parent-school relations;
. . . improved teacher and aide adult-to-adult interpersonal and management skills; and
. . . increased involvement and understanding of the community in the educational process.

A paraprofessional is an individual who serves under the direction of a classroom teacher as an assistant in the educational process. Three types of paraprofessionals are commonly utilized in the public school: paid teacher aides, volunteers, and peer or cross-peer tutors. The focus of this paper will be on the most frequently utilized paraprofessional in special education, the paid teacher aide.

Differentiated staffing patterns use teacher aides to augment the teacher in the education of handicapped students. The special education teacher aide's role is significantly different from that of the traditional teacher aide in the amount of time devoted to direct instruction of students. In contrast to regular education aides, special education

teacher aides spend a greater share of their time, approximately 60%, in direct instruction (Vasa, Steckelberg, & Ronning, 1982).

The results of a survey conducted by Vasa, Steckelberg, and Ronning (1982) indicate that although teacher aides are widely used in special education programs in Nebraska, additional preservice and inservice training for teacher aides and special education teachers was desired by all respondents, including special education teachers, administrators, and teacher aides. Over 80% of the special education teachers indicated that they did not have specific training at either the preservice or inservice level in supervising and managing teacher aides. Nearly 85% of the teacher aides in the survey indicated they had received no formal training for their positions.

The purpose of this position paper is to provide guidelines for establishing and operating teacher aide programs in special education programs. It is the feeling of the authors that providing guidelines and information to special education personnel may be the most effective approach to improving the quality of services provided by special education teacher aides.

Topics and issues covered in the guide include the legal and ethical issues in utilizing special education teacher aides, the respective professional and aide roles, supervision of teacher aides, and evaluation of teacher aides and aide programs.

CHAPTER I

LEGAL ASPECTS OF USING PARAPROFESSIONALS

Common concerns of special education personnel utilizing special education teacher aides and other paraprofessionals include:

. . . What instructional activities can teacher aides legally perform?

. . . How much responsibility should be delegated to special education teacher aides?

. . . What does Nebraska law say about the use of special education teacher aides?

. . . What are the consequences for teachers who use special education teacher aides inappropriately?

. . . Which ethical guidelines are important for special education teacher aides?

Some of the above listed questions have been of enough concern to warrant the attention of the Nebraska Professional Practices Commission. Figure 1 provides descriptions of such sample cases.

From a legal and ethical point of view, delineating the roles of special education teachers and teacher aides is most important. Nebraska Statute LB 79-1233, and the Nebraska Professional Practices Commission have provided guidelines for local districts in the utilization of paraprofessionals. In this chapter, the legal and ethical issues confronting special education teachers and local school districts in the employment of teacher aides will be explored.

State Statutes

In 1969, the Nebraska Unicameral enacted legislation permitting Nebraska schools to employ non-certified teacher aides. Section 79-1233 of the Nebraska State Statutes reads:

> 79-1233. Nebraska certificate; prerequisite to teaching; employment of teacher aides; requirements; junior colleges, not required. (1) No person shall be employed to teach in any public, private, denominational, or parochial school in this state who does not hold a valid Nebraska certificate or permit issued by the Commissioner of Education legalizing

A small rural school district has difficulty finding certified teachers to serve as substitute teachers. Can teacher aides who are non-certified be employed to take the place of regular teachers strictly on a substitution basis?

An educational service unit has trouble finding enough certified teachers in the area of speech pathology. The service unit decides to train certified teachers without endorsements in speech pathology to serve as aides for a speech pathologist. These aides are to perform their duties in a classroom setting in which the regular classroom teacher is present and the speech pathologist normally visits once a week. Since the speech pathologist is not in the same room with the aides, are they considered to be performing duties without proper supervision?

Regarding the same area of concern, a teacher who has a very responsible (non-certified) aide feels assured that she or he can leave his or her classroom for up to one-half hour while the aide serves in a supervisory capacity. Is this proper behavior on the part of the teacher? Would the aide be legally and ethically correct to refuse to serve in such a capacity?

A teacher requests his or her aide to select instructional materials and then expects the aide to implement academic tasks that the aide feels are appropriate. Are these duties that a teacher can routinely or even occasionally expect from his or her aide?

A teacher aide is concerned about being asked to supervise students on the playground. This aide has been left alone on a routine basis to supervise students while they play games during recess periods. Is this aide being given too much responsibility in the area of supervision? Is this type of supervisory duty considered to be different from supervisory duty while students are in the classroom?

Figure 1

Examples of Cases Which Have Been Presented Before the Nebraska Professional Practices Commission in the Form of an Inquiry or a Complaint

Source: Nebraska Professional Practices Commission, *Biennial Report*. Lincoln, Nebraska: Nebraska Department of Education, 1982.

him to teach the grade or subjects to which elected, except that no Nebraska certificate or permit shall be required of persons teaching exclusively in junior colleges organized as part of the public school system.

(2) Public, private, denominational, or parochial schools in the state may employ persons who do not hold a valid Nebraska teaching certificate or permit issued by the Commissioner of Education to serve as aides to a teacher or teachers. Such teacher aides may not assume any teaching responsibilities. A teacher aide may be assigned duties which are non-teaching in nature, if the employing school has assured itself that the aide has been specifically prepared for such duties, including the handling of emergency situations which might arise in the course of his work.

The legislation includes significant restrictions in teacher aide use:

(1) aides may not be assigned teaching responsibilities, and

(2) if assigned responsibility for non-teaching duties, aides must be specifically prepared for these duties.

In 1971, legislation further defined teaching. In conjunction with earlier law, the responsibilities which teacher aides *cannot* assume are clarified. LB 79-101 of the Nebraska State Statues defines teaching responsibilities in sub-section (B):

79-101. Terms, defined. As used in Chapter 79(13) the term teach shall mean and include, but not be limited to, the following responsibilities: (a) The organization and management of the classroom or the physical area in which the learning experiences of pupils take place, (b) the assessment and diagnosis of the individual educational needs of the pupils, (c) the planning, selecting, organizing, prescribing and directing of the learning experiences of pupils, (d) the planning of teaching strategies and the selection of available materials and equipment to be used, and (e) the evaluation and reporting of student progress.

Nebraska Professional Practices Commission

In 1967, the Nebraska Professional Practices Commission was established through Statutes 79-1280 to 79-1286, R.R.S. 1943 (Reissue 1981). The purpose of the Commission, composed of twelve members of the educational profession appointed by the Governor, is to establish standards of ethics and competency for Nebraska public school educators. The Commission also seeks to promote understanding of and adherence to the standards of ethics and competency and provides an orderly method of

resolving disputes. In the following sections, the Commission's stance on teacher responsibilities, employment and supervision of aides, liability for aide activities, and ethical standards is presented.

Teaching Responsibilities

In 1977, the Professional Practices Commission published a statement adopting the definition of teaching as outlined in LB 79-101 (Nebraska Professional Practices Commission, 1977).

According to this policy, teaching responsibilities must be met by a teacher and cannot be delegated to an aide. The teacher must function in a leadership role and the aide in a supportive role.

In July of 1980, a case involving the use of a teacher aide was heard by the Professional Practices Commission (*Boyer and Wilbanks v. Johnson*, 1982). The hearing addressed a number of issues dealing with the use of non-certified teacher aides. A teacher aide filed a complaint against a teacher who had assigned an aide to perform teaching duties. The specific allegations were that the aide had been assigned to teach an art class with no specific pre-planning between the teacher and the aide, and that the teacher did not direct the aide prior to class time unless there was something specific the teacher wanted the aide to do.

The aide was asked to grade art work and individual projects. The hearing committee found that the aide in this case had performed teaching duties and the teacher was in violation of the rules and regulations of the Nebraska Professional Practices Commission. It was ordered by the Commission that the teacher in this case receive a reprimand for improper use of teacher aides and a warning that repeated violations of the improper use could constitute a recommendation to the State Board of Education for suspension or revocation of the teacher's teaching certificate.

Employment of Teacher Aides

An aide may not, under any circumstances, be hired or used to replace a classroom teacher. Nor can aides be assigned to serve in lieu of teachers under the supervision of a principal or nearby classroom teacher. In addition a principal or a superintendent may not replace a school librarian by assigning an aide to a library or media center to serve under his or her supervision. *A teacher aide may not be used in lieu of certified personnel.*

Further, a school district may not assign teaching responsibilities to a person who holds a valid teaching certificate but is employed as an aide. The position statement stresses: "If the employing district believes

the certified person is qualified and should be assigned to meet the responsibilities of teaching, the district should hire him or her under a regular teaching contract . . . . If a certificated person agrees to employment as an aide, holding a teaching certificate is incidental . . . " (Nebraska Professional Practices Commission, 1977).

Supervision of Aides

In academic situations a teacher aide must operate under the continuous supervision of a teacher. The teacher must be able to control and/or modify the situation. An aide may not man an instructional station alone, except for brief periods of time.

In nonacademic situations aides can, subject to local district policy, be assigned to supervise non-teaching activities. Nonacademic activities would include supervision of playgrounds, bus loading stations, cafeterias, and study halls.

Liability for Aides' Activities

Students can be left in the care of teacher aides without the school district or its personnel risking liability. The question of liability is not one of teacher certification, but is whether the individual (teacher or aide) in charge is responsible and competent and whether his or her duties were carried out in a manner "demonstrating reasonable care and normal precaution."

Ethical Standards

Ethical standards set forth by the Nebraska State Board of Education and the Professional Practices Commission which apply to the use of teacher aides state:

> 1) . . . the educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position of responsibility on the basis of professional preparation and legal qualifications.
>
> 2) . . . the educator shall not delegate assigned tasks to unqualified personnel.
>
> 3) . . . the educator shall practice the profession only with proper certification, and shall actively oppose the practice of the profession by persons known to be unqualified. (Nebraska Professional Practices Commission, n.d.)

Legal Recourse for Improper Use of Aides

The Professional Practices Commission is authorized to provide a means for self-monitoring the teaching profession (79-1280 to 79-1286, R.R.S. 1943)(Reissue 1981). The Commission has done this by providing an orderly method of resolving disputes through a system involving inquiries, complaints, and/or hearings. This process, however, is relevant only to certified teachers. If a problem arises involving the misuse of a teacher's authority or other inappropriate actions of a teacher concerning the use of teacher aides, the process set forth by the Professional Practices Commission can be utilized. Disputes involving aides only can be resolved either through the local school district grievance procedures or through civil action.

General Ethical Considerations for Working with Handicapped Students

As an employee of the school and as a person in a position of authority over students, teacher aides are obligated to meet ethical standards for dealing with handicapped students in general. The supervising professional must also assume responsibility for insuring that the teacher aides meet these ethical standards. The general ethical standards outlined below are designed to insure that fair and equitable treatment is provided to all students and that student and parent rights are protected.

. . . Paraprofessionals should not engage in instructional activities for which they are not qualified, i.e., diagnosis, instructional planning, etc.

. . . Paraprofessionals should refrain from discussing a child's progress, limitations, and educational program with individuals other than the supervising teacher.

. . . Paraprofessionals should refrain from discussing: (a) school problems and confidential matters, including personalities, and (b) administrative and school problems in the presence of students.

. . . Paraprofessionals should refrain from expressing differences of opinion or dissatisfaction with the supervising teacher in the presence of students.

. . . Paraprofessionals should respect the dignity and self-worth of all students.

. . . Paraprofessionals should ensure that they do not engage in discriminatory practices based on a student's handicap, race, sex, cultural background, or religion.

. . . Paraprofessionals have the responsibility to see that the best interests of individual students are being met and take appropriate steps when a student's personal rights are being violated.

. . . Paraprofessionals should serve as positive role models for appropriate personal interactions and communication.

. . . Paraprofessionals are adult role models for appropriate behavior and should strive to exhibit the highest standard of conduct possible.

. . . Paraprofessionals should engage in behavior management strategies which are consistent with standards established by the local school district.

. . . Paraprofessionals should follow the grievance procedures outlined by the local school district.

. . . Paraprofessionals should not communicate progress or concerns about students to parents without authorization of the supervising teacher.

Summary

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that there are no definitive guidelines concerning the exact legal limitations of special education teacher aides in the classroom. The resources that best delineate their responsibilities are the Nebraska Statutes and the Position Statement published by the Nebraska Professional Practices Commission (1977). In part, the legal and ethical responsibility for the proper use of teacher aides rests on the professional and ethical judgment of the special education teacher and administrator. Special education teacher aides must not be used to "teach" and they must be specifically prepared to perform non-teaching duties. A teacher aide may be assigned duties which are non-teaching in nature, if the employing school has assured that the aide is specifically prepared for such duties, including the handling of emergency situations which might arise in the course of his or her work.

CHAPTER II

SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER AND TEACHER AIDE ROLES

A clear delineation of the differential roles of the special education teacher and the teacher aide is an important element of a successful special education program. Identification of special education teacher and aide roles insures adherence to ethical and legal requirements and serves as a guide in supervision and evaluation. Many of the roles of teachers and teacher aides are specific to the school district of employment and must be developed at the local level. There are, however, general guidelines for developing these roles. In this chapter, the roles and duties of teachers and aides are outlined. Also sample job descriptions for teacher aides are illustrated and guidelines for effective team relationships are described.

Special Education Teacher Roles

The teacher's primary role is one of managing the teaching and learning environment which may include a teacher aide. Actual delivery of instruction to the student may be carried out by the aide under the direct supervision of the instructor. The teacher's responsibilities to the handicapped learner include:

. . . assessing the student's entry level performance;

. . . planning instruction for individual students;

. . . implementing the goals and objectives of the individualized education plan;

. . . supervising and coordinating work of paraprofessionals and other support staff;

. . . evaluating and reporting student progress;

. . . involving parents in their child's education; and

. . . coordinating and managing information provided by personnel such as psychologists, physicians, social workers, speech and language therapists, regular education teachers, and parents.

The special education teacher also has a number of roles to fulfill in the proper utilization of the teacher aide in the classroom. Heller

and Pickett (1983) have identified specific teacher responsibilities and roles involved in managing teacher aides:

. . . Set an example of professionalism with regard to the execution of teacher responsibilities.

. . . Establish the criteria for acceptable job performance of the paraprofessional at the beginning of the school year.

. . . Provide consistent feedback to assist the paraprofessional in refining skills.

. . . Communicate the needs of each student to the paraprofessional.

. . . Establish and communicate the paraprofessional's role in classroom behavior management.

. . . Establish the strategies and schedules for meeting the IEP goals of each student and communicate these to the paraprofessional.

. . . Assign the paraprofessional responsibilities which facilitate the teacher's ability to provide more direct student instruction.

. . . Assist the paraprofessional in defining his or her position as an authority figure.

In addition, the special education teacher should prepare the teacher aide to carry out assigned classroom activities. This preparation should consist of ongoing inservice, as well as specific daily instructions and a clear delineation of instructional activities to be performed.

Roles of Paraprofessionals

Nebraska statutes define the limits of teacher aide duties by delineating responsibilities that are assumed by the teacher. These include: organizing and managing the classroom, assessing and diagnosing student needs; directing learning experiences, planning teaching strategies and selecting teaching materials; and evaluating and reporting student progress. The statutes indicate that teacher aides may be assigned only to non-teaching duties, permitting teacher aides to perform a wide variety of activities.

Various factors influencing the specific responsibilities assigned to teacher aides include: characteristics and personalities of teachers,

aides, and students; interpersonal skills of both teachers and aides; the skill level of the aide; the physical environment of the classroom; the type of special education classroom, i.e., level of handicap; and classroom operating procedures. Individual special education teachers may vary the responsibilities of the aide to enhance the program of instruction. The following list illustrates instructional and administrative duties which could be assigned to the teacher aide in a special education program:

. . . Assist individual students in performing activities initiated by the teacher.

. . . Supervise children in the hallway, lunchroom, and playground.

. . . Assist in monitoring supplementary work and independent study.

. . . Reinforce learning in small groups or individuals while the teacher works with other students.

. . . Assist in educational demonstrations for the class or small groups.

. . . Provide assistance with individualized programmed materials.

. . . Score objective tests and papers and maintain appropriate records for teachers.

. . . Perform clerical tasks, i.e., typing and duplicating.

. . . Assist the teacher in observing, recording, and charting behavior.

. . . Assist the teacher with crisis problems and behavior management.

. . . Assist in preparation/production of instructional materials.

. . . Carry out instructional programs designed by the teacher.

. . . Work with the teacher to develop classroom schedules

. . . Carry out tutoring activities designed by the teacher.

. . . Operate and maintain classroom equipment including film projectors, overhead projectors, etc.

Figure 2 provides an extensive list of functions which a teacher aide could perform in the special classroom. The figure is provided to illustrate more specifically activities which the teacher aide could undertake in the special education classroom.

The teacher aide may perform these instructional duties:

1. Assist in organizing field trips.
2. Read aloud or listen to children read.
3. Assist students in performing activities that have been initiated by the teacher.
4. Hand out papers and collect paper work.
5. Assist with supplementary work for advanced pupils.
6. Provide special help such as drilling with flash cards, spelling, and play activities.
7. Assist in preparing instructional materials.
8. Reinforce learning with small groups.
9. Assist children in learning their names, addresses, telephone numbers, birthdays, and parents' names.
10. Supervise free play activities.
11. Prepare flash cards and charts.
12. Prepare art supplies and other materials.
13. Hear requests for help, observe learning difficulties of pupils, and report such matters to teachers.
14. Score objective tests and papers and keep appropriate records for teachers.
15. Assist the teacher in escorting children on educational trips outside the classroom.
16. Assist in educational demonstrations for the class or small groups.
17. Support the teacher in the areas of sewing, cooking, industrial arts, and physical education.
18. Assist in arranging learning centers.
19. Provide assistance with individualized programmed materials.
20. Work with individual students or small groups on language development as outlined by the speech clinician.
21. Check attendance and permission slips and telephone absentees when requested by the teacher.
22. Help with inventory of supplies and textbooks.
23. Assist in decorating room, cutting mats for pictures, changing pictures on bulletin boards, and mounting pupils' work.
24. Type tests, bibliographies, lists, notices, class materials, dittos, and others.
25. Duplicate tests and other materials.
26. Check objective portions of homework, workbooks, etc.
27. Record test results and grades.

Figure 2

Teacher Aide Acceptable and Unacceptable Duties and Responsibilities

28. Keep attendance register.
29. Prepare routine reports not requiring professional judgment.
30. Keep all files current.
31. Perform routine telephone duties.
32. Deliver mail, records, instructional materials, and other items.
33. Collect and prepare records of money brought by students for various purposes.
34. Put work on chalkboard.
35. Order films and others supplies.
36. Make arrangements for field trips.

Instructional duties the teacher aide may not perform:

1. Be solely responsible for a classroom or a professional service.
2. Be responsible for the diagnostic and programming functions of the classroom.
3. Be reponsible for preparing lesson plans and initiating original concept instruction.
4. Be responsible for assigning grades to a student.
5. Be used as a substitute for certified teachers unless he or she possesses the appropriate substitute teacher's certificate and is employed as a teacher on a temporary basis.
6. Assume full responsibility for supervising assemblies or field trips.
7. Perform a duty that is primarily instructional in nature.
8. Be assigned to work with the most "difficult" students the majority of the day in a "babysitting-type" of arrangement.

Noninstructional duties the teacher aide may not perform:

1. Shall not assume full responsibility for supervising and planning activities.
2. Shall not take children to clinic, dental, or medical appointments unless permission is granted by authorized personnel.
3. Shall not program and prescribe educational activities and materials for children.
4. Shall not grade subjective or essay tests.
5. Shall not regulate pupil behavior by corporal punishment or similar disciplinary means.
6. Shall not assign grades or other evaluational criteria to students' tasks.
7. Shall not be responsible for medical needs of children.

Figure 2 (continued)

Source: Guidelines for the Training, Utilization and Supervision of Paraprofessionals and Aides. Topeka, Kansas: Kansas State Department of Education, 1977.

Teacher Aide Job Descriptions

The job description is useful in clarifying the roles of the teacher aide in the special education program and can serve as a reference point in conducting an evaluation of paraprofessional performance. The job description should specifically delineate the aide's duties in writing and many change from time to time, depending on the needs of students and staff. Often included are the duties which teacher aides are to perform and the duties which the teacher aides are *not* to perform, as dictated by school district policy, ethical and legal constraints, and school protocol. Administrative concerns such as working conditions, supervision procedures, and evaluation procedures may also appear in a written job description. Figure 3 contains a sample job description for a special education teacher aide including the above components.

Job descriptions will vary depending on the needs of staff and students and duties expected to be performed by a teacher aide. Figure 4 provides an example of a job description which varies in format and focuses on the aide's responsibilities to various individuals involved in the education of special needs students.

Contrast of Roles and Guidelines for Effective Relationships

To the casual observer, it might appear that a teacher and aide working side by side in serving special education students are performing identical tasks; however, the roles of teachers and aides differ. In defining responsibilities, it is helpful to compare and contrast the roles appropriately performed by teachers and paraprofessionals. Figure 5 contrasts the roles of teachers and aides at various teaching activities.

Students frequently test the authority of those in a supervisory capacity, certificated or not. The behavior of students must be monitored constantly and steps taken to insure that students perceive aides and teachers as having joint authority in the classroom. Other guidelines necessary to the development of an effective teaching team, as presented by Heller and Pickett (1983), follow.

Guidelines for Effective Team Relationships

The paraprofessional and the special education teacher work in a close relationship which needs to be nurtured in a positive manner. Several points are presented to provide guidance to the classroom teacher in maintaining effective team relationships.

1. Lesson plans should be written clearly so that the paraprofessional can follow them. As time goes on and the paraprofessional becomes familiar with the routine, the planning can be less detailed.

Job Title: Special Education Teacher Aide

Job Requirements

1. Evidence of good mental and physical health
2. Correct articulation and language use
3. Attend and meet success criteria of required training program
4. Eighteen years of age or older

Duties

1. The aides will:
   a. Carry out remedial or developmental activities as directed by the certificated person in charge
   b. Measure and chart behavior for each target student as directed by the person in charge
   c. Assist teachers and specialists in collection and preparation of instructional materials and equipment
   d. Record session effectiveness
   e. Maintain a time log of activities
   f. Maintain good public relations with parents and staff

2. They will not:
   a. Engage in diagnostic activities
   b. Make prescriptive judgments
   c. Relieve any certificated person or professional of supervisory duties
   d. Be utilized in any activities with children other than those designated in the project
   e. Disseminate information regarding children without permission of the specialist or teacher

Approximate Division of Time (based on 30-hour week)

	Percent
1. Direct work with children:	70
2. Record keeping:	5
3. Reporting to teacher or specialist:	5
4. Receiving and discussing assignments:	10
5. Inservice training:	5
6. Preparation of materials and equipment:	5

Figure 3

Sample Job Description for a Special Education Teacher Aide

Evaluation

1. The aides will be evaluated at least once each nine weeks
2. A teacher or specialist will conduct the evaluation
3. The evaluation will be based on an objective measure of completion of assigned duties, criterion 95%, on a subjective rating scale 0-10, criterion 6.0
4. Failure to meet criteria more than once a year will lead to dismissal
5. The evaluator will discuss the evaluation results with each aide and school principal (or other appropriate administrator) in matters pertaining to district policy

Supervision

1. The aides will be directly responsible to the teacher or specialist in instructional and support role matters
2. The aides will be responsible to the building administrators in matters pertaining to district policy
3. The aides will be responsible to the appropriate member of the administration in matters strictly related to the Title I grant award document if such matters are not clearly defined in (1) or (2) above

Figure 3 (continued)

Source: Hiltbrunner, C. L. Using instructional aides with exceptional children. *Slow Learner Workshop*, 1976.

I. Responsibilities to Resource Specialist

A. Clerical
1. Keeping daily attendance
2. Recording grades
3. Correcting papers
4. Help maintain physical classroom environment, e.g., bulletin boards
5. Inventory of materials
6. Getting out and putting away instructional materials
7. Making instructional materials
8. Responsible for audiovisual and duplicating

B. Instructional
1. Carry out instructional activities as planned by the teacher
2. Assist the teacher in classroom behavior management as designated by the teacher
3. Provide objective feedback to teacher on student progress and behavior
4. Carry out specific activities with students mainstreamed into regular classes as directed by the resource specialist

II. Responsibilities to Classroom Teachers

A. Maintain effective communication with teachers
B. Provide feedback to teacher on progress of students tutored in the regular classroom

III. Responsibilities to the Student

A. Establish a positive working relationship with students
B. Be able to give directions to students in an understandable way
C. Be able to locate and use designated materials
D. Provide student with feedback and reinforcement on his or her performance consistent with teacher's behavior management plan

Figure 4

Job Description for Teacher Aides in the Resource Room

IV. Responsibility to the Administration

A. Follow all rules and regulations relating to school and district policies
   1. Know and use chain of command for requests and grievances
   2. Be responsible in the use of time
   3. Know and follow emergency procedures
   4. Know and keep school schedules and procedures
   5. Complete material and supply requisitions
   6. Be familiar with the discipline philosophy and procedures
B. Know and follow the goals and job descriptions of a paraprofessional
C. Maintain ethical standards and code of dependability as expected of all professionals

Figure 4 (continued)

	Roles Performed by Teacher	Roles Performed by Teacher Aide
Classroom Organization	1. Plans weekly schedule 2. Plans lessons/ activities for entire class and individual children 3. Plans room arrangement and learning centers	1. Implements plan as specified by the teacher
Assessment	1. Assesses individual children 2. Administers tests to entire class	1. Assists with monitoring and scoring
Setting Objectives	1. Determines appropriate objectives for class and for individual children	1. Implements lessons to meet child's instructional objectives
Teaching	1. Teaches lessons for the entire class, small groups, and individual children	1. Assists small groups and individuals with lesson
Behavior Management	1. Plans behavior management strategies for entire class and for individual children	1. Implements behavioral management strategies using the same emphasis and techniques as the teacher
Working with Parents	1. Meets with parents 2. Initiates conferences concerning child's progress	1. Meets with parents under direction of the teacher
Individual Educational Planning	1. Develops and implements IEP	1. Carries out teacher's plans for child

Figure 5

Comparison of Teacher and Aide Roles in Special Education

Source: Semrau, B. L., Lemay, D. C. et al. *Why not competence: A guide for training special education aides.* Jonesboro, Arkansas: Focus on Children, Inc.

2. The paraprofessional should supervise a group of children at individual activities (seatwork) while the teacher works with one child or a group of children. The paraprofessional will learn the routine more quickly by working actively with children than by passively watching.

3. The teacher should not assume that the paraprofessional fully understands how a special education program is supposed to operate. Many have only their own school experience or that of their own children to draw upon.

4. The teacher should plan the daily lesson plans with the paraprofessional at a regularly scheduled time each day. The paraprofessional should know precisely what duties and responsibilities he or she is to fulfill each day.

5. The teacher and paraprofessional should communicate their observations concerning the emotional and physical health of each student. Often the paraprofessional can alert the teacher to problems which may have been overlooked. The teacher should share his or her knowledge about the specific emotional and physical needs of each pupil with the paraprofessional.

6. The teacher and paraprofessional should have a coordinated plan for dealing with discipline problems and a strategy for dealing with emergencies of a physical or emotional nature concerning the students.

7. The teacher and paraprofessional should be sensitive to each other's levels of physical and emotional stress while dealing with special students. Each member of the team should be alert to the needs of the other to offer assistance and support during stressful periods.

8. The teacher should make the effort to expose the paraprofessional to the benefit of training and experience which the teacher can share or that others can share with the paraprofessional. The paraprofessional deserves the opportunity to grow in the profession by being included in some of the workshops and conferences in which the teacher participates.

CHAPTER III

THE SPECIAL EDUCATION PARAPROFESSIONAL PROGRAM

The effective use of paraprofessionals requires planning and the coordination of a number of elements of the school system. Planning is necessary to ensure that the program is one which is both fiscally sound and meets the needs of handicapped children. In this chapter, the following aspects of a well-orchestrated special education paraprofessional program will be discussed: administration, guidelines for training paraprofessionals, and supervision and evaluation of personnel.

Administration of Paraprofessional Programs

While local educational agencies have considerable latitude in the development and administration of paraprofessional programs, there are common concerns and tasks which must be performed. Securing funding, allocating a budget, determining wages and fringe benefits, and developing procedural and policy handbooks are important initial and ongoing tasks. Other aspects of program planning such as the use of needs assessment, the development of job descriptions, the selection and hiring of paraprofessionals, the assignment of paraprofessionals, and the determination of administrative concerns should also merit attention. One of the components frequently receiving little consideration is that of needs assessment.

Needs Assessment

Needs assessment information can be a valuable administrative decision-making and resource allocation tool. Issues commonly addressed in the needs assessment include: (1) extent of special education staff needsfor paraprofessionals; (2) needs of handicapped students for additional support; (3) special education teacher needs for training in the use and management of paraprofessionals; (4) paraprofessional needs and training; and (5) availability of qualified paraprofessionals.

Student and staff needs provide a sound basis for determining whether a program should be initiated, expanded, or reduced. Factors to be considered might include special education teacher/pupil ratio, the type and nature of handicapped children being served, the level of teacher training, implementation of new curricula, and needs for non-teaching duties to be performed.

Other factors to be considered include past paraprofessional and special education teacher job performance, requests for additional

training by paraprofessionals and/or teachers, and the resources available to support the paraprofessional program.

Development of a Job Description

A natural outgrowth of such a needs assessment is the development or amendment of a job description for paraprofessionals to be employed the following school year. Administrators may choose to call on the supervising teacher(s) to assist in the definition of expected duties. Depending on the size of the school building and the number of aides to be employed, it is possible that more than one job description for paraprofessionals will be written. For example, in larger schools, perhaps one job description will define the location of service as in the resource room while another job description would indicate that the aide would work with severely handicapped students within a self-contained room. Local needs and characteristics of potential employees influence the assigned duties outlined in a job description. The reader is referred to the preceding chapter for samples of job descriptions.

Selection and Hiring of Paraprofessionals

Previous job experience, references, educational level, literacy and language skills, and basic skills applicable to the position (e.g., typing, duplicating) are all worthy of attention in selecting candidates. Research shows, however, that interpersonal skills and personal characteristics of the candidate seem to be more vital to the selection process.

Vasa, Steckelberg and Ronning (1982) found that both administrators and special education teachers in Nebraska most commonly use the selection criteria of attitudes toward handicapped children and interpersonal skills with children in choosing teacher aides. Other selection criteria commonly used in Nebraska schools include:

. . . references
. . . basic skills applicable to position
. . . interpersonal skills with adults
. . . previous employment
. . . experience with handicapped
. . . health and physical strength

Selection criteria less commonly used in Nebraska include knowledge of special education programs, minimum age, and completion of aide training programs.

A survey conducted by the Kansas State Department of Education (1983) similarly found that skills in understanding the characteristics of special education students and skills related to working with children were most important in the training of a paraprofessional.

The Kansas survey also asked directors of special education, superintendents, facilitators, supervisors of paraprofessionals, and

paraprofessionals to rank order personal characteristics of successful paraprofessionals. The respondents ranked the characteristics of dependability, adaptability, and cooperation as most important.

Among other competencies, O'Brien (1977) listed the following characteristics to seek in a paraprofessional candidate:

. . . an interest in self-improvement
. . . proficiency in the observing of and nonjudgmental reporting of behavior
. . . knowledge of how and when to encourage children to promote favorable behavior
. . . an understanding of the importance of sound emotional and social conditions within the classroom
. . . a philosophy of education in keeping with the school's

Although it is difficult to objectively assess a potential employee's personality and interpersonal skills, they are important in the paraprofessional's ability to work effectively in the special education classroom. An attempt to judge these characteristics, along with those of self-confidence, patience, and personal warmth is best made during the interview.

It is good practice to include the teacher with whom the prospective aide will work in the preemployment interview. Inclusion of the supervising teacher in the interview can help minimize potential personality conflicts and insures clear understanding of duties to be performed. The candidate should be allowed to review the written job description and be given information related to the organization of the school and the target student population. Finally it is important that the administrator have a written set of competencies and personal qualities which is expected in the prospective aide.

Assignment of Aides

A survey of the characteristics and needs of the handicapped student population and staff can be an effective means of supporting decisions regarding the placement of paraprofessionals within the special education program. Characteristics of the program considered in making assignments might include:

. . . class size or caseload
. . . student characteristics such as age, degree of handicapping condition, ability to work independently, etc.
. . . teacher characteristics such as management and interpersonal skills, teaching style
. . . need for supervision of students in lunchroom, on playground, and in halls
. . . building and classroom organization (e.g., self-contained classrooms versus multi-unit school)

. . . implementation of new curricula or materials placing extra demands on teachers and students
. . . level of special education teacher training in the use of paraprofessionals
. . . level of training of paraprofessionals

Flexibility in the assignment of paraprofessionals is important in making the most effective use of personnel. Initial placements should not necessarily be permanent. These decisions may be reconsidered after a paraprofessional has had time to develop and display interpersonal skills, competencies, and rapport with students. It should be noted that the teacher-teacher aide relationship is a personal one requiring time to develop. Assigning an aide to more than two or three teachers may result in limited relationships and the underutilization of the teacher aide as an instructional assistant.

Other Administrative Concerns

The role of the administrator is central in the articulation of a well-planned paraprofessional program. Administrative responsibilities include assessing the needs of the school, developing corresponding job descriptions, selecting both paraprofessionals and professionals who meet program needs, and making effective assignment decisions.

The development of criteria for dismissal and procedures for handling complaints and grievances of both teachers and paraprofessionals avoids conflicts and misunderstandings. Preservice and inservice training for aides provides opportunities for personal development, improves services provided in the classroom, and gives the aide a sense of being part of the school. Consideration should be given to career progression and equitable compensation for aides who desire and seek training outside the school district. Evaluation of the entire paraprofessional program and performance of personnel may provide direction in improving services to handicapped students, cost effectiveness, staff morale, etc. Administrative concerns related to the training and evaluation of paraprofessionals are discussed further in the following sections.

Guidelines for Training of Paraprofessionals

Special education teacher aides in Nebraska receive little preservice and ongoing inservice training (Vasa, Steckelberg, & Ronning, 1982). Sixty percent of administrators, eighty-two percent of special education teachers, and eighty-five percent of teacher aides report that no preservice training was provided for newly employed teacher aides. A similar percentage also reported that no ongoing inservice for teacher aides occurs.

In sharp contrast, however, fifty-two percent of administrators, eighty-two percent of teachers, and sixty percent of aides perceive formal training as a prerequisite to employment as a teacher aide. Most thought local educational agencies should establish guidelines for training and that this training should be conducted by the local educational agency or a master teacher.

In order for schools to use the talents, interests, and abilities of paraprofessionals, it is important that they be trained to know the limits of their job description, the policies and procedures of the school, and task specific skills which they will be expected to perform. The employing school has a responsibility to train paraprofessionals to work within the limits of the state laws controlling the use of paraprofessionals in schools. Nebraska statutes clearly state that a teacher aide must be specifically prepared to perform non-teaching duties. Section 79-1233 reads:

> A teacher aide may be assigned duties which are non-teaching in nature, if the employing school has assured itself that the aide has been specifically prepared for such duties, including the handling of emergency situations which might arise in the course of his work.

According to the previously cited survey, eleven training areas were recognized as needed by teacher aides. These training areas stated in competency form are presented in Figure 6.

Rittenhouse (1972), in a description of guidelines and training programs in several states, notes that these areas are also included in some training programs: record keeping procedures, development of the learning atmosphere, human growth and development, child psychology, and problems of the disadvantaged student.

Involving teachers and paraprofessionals in designing and providing training often results in more relevant topics and instruction. Their involvement also contributes to improved job satisfaction, morale, and a desire to improve skills.

The goals of the training program may be achieved either through formal inservice training or on-the-job training in the classroom. On-the-job training may be particularly effective in teaching certain types of skills provided that the training is systematically planned and carried out. Provision for outside training and other appropriate incentives are important in attracting and keeping quality paraprofessionals employed within the district.

Paraprofessionals completing training will be able to:

1. *Delineate the school policies affecting their roles.*
2. *Define the legal and ethical issues involved in their roles in the classroom.*
3. *Understand the role expectations of the position in relationship to the teacher, administrators, and students.*
4. *Demonstrate knowledge of handicapping conditions.*
5. *Demonstrate knowledge of behavior management and physical control strategies used with handicapped students.*
6. *Demonstrate skills in tutoring.*
7. *Demonstrate skills in observing, recording, and reporting student behavior.*
8. *Demonstrate the ability to use instructional-training materials.*
9. *Demonstrate the ability to use audiovisual, duplicating, and other equipment used in the education of handicapped students.*
10. *Demonstrate skills in first aid and safety procedures.*

Figure 6

Paraprofessional Training Competencies

Supervision and Evaluation of Paraprofessionals

Adequate supervision and evaluation of aide performance is an important component of an effective paraprofessional program. Heller and Pickett (1983) have noted that supervision is sometimes seen as negative because: (1) supervision has become synonymous with evaluation, and (2) supervision denotes control and possible interference. Heller and Pickett postulate that the main focus and purpose of supervising a teacher aide should be to assist the aide in improving his or her performance in the instructional setting. This "helping process" should be collaborative, involving "mutually reciprocal interaction between the supervisee and supervisor."

Teacher as Supervisor

Supervision of teacher aides is largely accomplished by special education teachers (Vasa, Steckelberg, & Ronning, 1982). Special education or building level administrators are often involved in the process, but to a lesser extent than teachers. While teachers assume this supervisory role, the majority (86%) report that they have no preservice training in the utilization of teacher aides.

Several practices ensure that a collaborative "helping process" type of supervision occurs between supervisor and teacher aide. These practices are:

. . . use of effective communication skills
. . . planned introduction of paraprofessionals to duties and gradual orientation to the classroom
. . . training of the aide to perform specific instructional tasks and identification of formal training needs
. . . planning and evaluation of lesson plans
. . . provision of means for daily monitoring and communication
. . . provision for weekly conference/planning time
. . . summative evaluation of the overall program effectiveness

Effective Communication Skills

A collaborative supervision process is predicated on clear, effective communication. Avoiding educational jargon ensures that a common base of language and vocabulary exists between teachers and the aide. Precision in requests and an assessment of the degree to which communication has been comprehended by the aide also contributes to effective teacher-paraprofessional communication. Other elements of effective communication include: clear and consistent expectations; opportunity for paraprofessional input; adequate written procedures; appropriate nonthreatening feedback; respect in both verbal and nonverbal communications.

Orientation to the Classroom

Because buildings and classrooms vary greatly, a newly-hired paraprofessional needs a general orientation to the building and time to observe before assuming an instructional role in a classroom. A mutual exchange of information between the teacher and paraprofessional is important in eliminating misunderstandings. Background information helpful to the teacher includes the paraprofessional's educational level, previous work experiences, experiences with children, attitudes toward the handicapped, and sociocultural background.

The paraprofessional likewise should be provided with background information. A well-written job description provides the aide with an

idea of expected duties. Prior to working directly with students the paraprofessional may also find additional information of value:

- . . . physical arrangement, grouping patterns, daily routines, structure, and rules of the classroom
- . . . location and general content of instructional materials, equipment, and supplies
- . . . systems of evaluating student progress and other forms of record keeping
- . . . behavior management/discipline strategies
- . . . teacher characteristics such as teaching style, ways of motivating students, and instructional strategies

Training Aides to Perform Tasks

Supervising teachers have a responsibility to thoroughly introduce tasks before assigning them. Further, if the supervisory process is truly collaborative, the aide and supervising teacher should jointly identify the training needs of the paraprofessional.

Planning and Evaluating Lessons

Before implementing a lesson it is necessary that an aide be given clear and precise directions. Sufficient opportunity to observe the teacher implement a similar lesson plan should be provided. Figure 7 contains a sample lesson plan which is a detailed description of the information needed by the paraprofessional in carrying out a lesson. The lesson plan is divided into five components: objective, activity, materials, reinforcement, and evaluation. Under each heading specific directions are provided for the paraprofessional. The intent of the lesson plan is to enable the paraprofessional to complete a lesson without making teaching decisions. The plan is readily adaptable to any special education program for the handicapped.

The responsibility of the supervising teacher for students extends beyond lesson plans. The teacher's daily monitoring includes the progress of students with whom the paraprofessional has worked.

Adequate supervision of the aide and smooth functioning of a classroom is facilitated by use of a long-range schedule of activities to be performed by both the teacher and the aide. The amount of detail on such schedules may vary from a simple listing of student names and skill areas to be instructed to a rough outline of activities to be conducted. The supervising special education teacher must remain especially flexible in drawing up such schedules as regular class demands and unplanned school activities frequently encroach on time spent with students.

Objective: When presented ten flashcards, multiples of three, the student will name the product with 90 percent accuracy within five minutes.

Activity:
1. Have the student sit opposite the tutor at a desk or table.
2. Show the flashcards one at a time.
3. Say "What is the answer?"
   Record a C on the chart for each problem the student gets correct. If the student does not say the correct answer, have the student make groups with counters to show the correct answer. Then have the student say the problem and the answer.

   Example: 3 x 2 would be shown by making three groups with two in each group. Then the student would say, "Three times two equals six."

Materials: Multiplication flashcards showing multiples of three, a box of counters, pencil

Chart: x 3

	Dates: 9/10	9/11	9/12	9/13	9/14
3 x 0					
3 x 1					
3 x 2					
3 x 3					
3 x 4					
3 x 5					
3 x 6					
3 x 7					
3 x 8					
3 x 9					

Reinforcement: Reinforce with positive comments, such as "Good job!" "Great!" "Super!" every two or three correct responses.

Evaluation: Did the student have to count to himself or herself on the problems correctly responded to?

Did the student meet the criteria of 90 percent correct in five minutes?

Figure 7

Sample Lesson Plan to be Conducted by the Paraprofessional

Weekly Conferences/Planning Time

A standing daily/weekly conference between the supervising teacher and aide provides for planning and scheduling of upcoming events and objectives and for evaluating the effectiveness of past activities. Following are key elements of a good conference between a teacher and aide:

. . . Determine in advance the purpose and/or content of the conference. If none is obvious, cancel the conference.

. . . Meeting times should be consistent.

. . . Conferences should be at a site accessible to instructional materials and free of interruptions and distractions.

. . . Conferences should be positive and oriented to problem solving rather than be teacher dominated.

. . . Discussion should be pertinent and efficient and end when the purposes have been met.

While the topics of each conference will vary, Heller and Pickett (1983) list general topics that can be handled well in the weekly conference:

- individualized education plans (IEP's)
- lesson planning (long- and short-range plans)
- teaching strategies
- pupil progress evaluation
- pupil interest
- parent-teacher conferences
- district philosophy
- ordering supplies
- routine duties
- classroom management
- materials and resources
- pupil records including cumulative records, paraprofessional/teacher liability
- school-community events
- employment procedures
- organizations and meetings

Evaluation of Paraprofessional Performance

Evaluating paraprofessional performance identifies training needs and determines how effectively the teacher aide is being utilized. The evaluation of teacher aide performance can be viewed as twofold:

1. Informal evaluation of paraprofessional performance by the supervising teacher occurs on an ongoing basis throughout the school year.

2. Formal evaluation involves the observations and ratings of administrators and parents in addition to those of supervising teachers.

Informal evaluation naturally occurs on a daily basis in situations in which adequate supervision is provided. In fact, in such situations the supervisory and evaluation processes may blend so that they occur simultaneously. The standing weekly conference between teacher and aide is a very appropriate time to evaluate the aide's implementation of instructional strategies, rapport with students, and need to perform other duties.

Since daily planning/communication time between teacher and aide is sometimes limited, a format for written evaluation of instruction conducted by the aide may be beneficial. Figure 8 presents a sample lesson evaluation form to be completed by the paraprofessional following completion of an instructional session.

In contrast to informal evaluation, a formal evaluation requires much more preplanning and often involves the use of standardized forms. Components of a formal evaluation process include:

1. Preobservation activities including defining concerns, establishing criteria of acceptable performance, and developing evaluative instruments.

2. Data gathering through formal observations, use of rating scales, questionnaires, etc.

3. Analysis of results and determination of behaviors to maintain or change.

4. Conference with person being evaluated to provide feedback and outline plans/strategies to improve or change behavior.

The formal evaluation process is frequently shared by teachers and administrators (Vasa, Steckelberg, & Ronning, 1982). The most commonly used evaluation techniques are observation by the supervisor and standard evaluation forms. Only a small percentage of administrators and special education teachers report the use of the following evaluation techniques: time logs of teacher aide activities, self-evaluations completed by aides, parent and student evaluations, and student attainment of goals.

Administrators and supervising teachers often draw on the written job description in defining areas of concern and establishing criteria

Paraprofessional Self-Evaluation

	Yes	No
1. Did I plan well for the lesson and understand the goals?	____	____
2. Did I introduce the lesson so that the child understood the concept that the lesson attempts to teach?	____	____
3. Was I enthusiastic enough to get the child interested in performing the task?	____	____
4. Did I explain what the child was to do in the practice activity so that he or she understood it?	____	____
5. Did I have all the materials I needed to teach the lesson?	____	____
6. Did I use appropriate reinforcement techniques?	____	____
7. Did I encourage him or her if he or she was having difficulty?	____	____
8. Was the lesson successful in terms of reaching the behavioral objective for the unit?	____	____

Student Evaluation

1. Was the child able to perform the task required in the lesson?
   ____ Yes ____ No Comment:

2. Did the child need other experiences before attempting the current lesson plan?
   ____ Yes ____ No Comment:

3. Was the child willing to try (motivated) to do the exercise?
   ____ Yes ____ No Comment:

4. Did he or she appear interested in the lesson?
   ____ Yes ____ No Comment:

Figure 8

Evaluation of the Instructional Session

of acceptable job performance. Items appearing on observation forms and rating scales are designed to match duties and responsibilities outlined in the job description. Again, local needs and expectations determine the specific content of evaluation instruments and specificity of items.

To assist local schools in developing instruments for evaluating the performance of paraprofessionals, several sample forms have been included in the appendix.

The Teacher Aide Evaluation Form (found on page A-1 of the appendix) is a sample rating scale which could be completed by the special education teacher, administrator, or other supervising personnel. Heller and Pickett (1983) have drawn up a rating scale to be used while conducting a formal observation of the paraprofessional carrying out an instructional activity. This Observation Checklist is found on page A-2 of the appendix.

Local school districts may choose to broaden the base of the evaluation and include parents, students, and teacher aides themselves as evaluators. A Parent Evaluation of the Paraprofessional Program appears on page A-3 of the appendix. The Paraprofessional Self-Rating Evaluation Form provides the opportunity for paraprofessionals to review areas of potential self-improvement. The Paraprofessional Self-Rating Evaluation Form appears on page A-4 of the appendix.

In addition to rating the performance of the paraprofessional involved in various activities, an important outcome of the evaluation process is the determination of how effectively the paraprofessional is being utilized. Recording the amount of time spent at various activities facilitates decisions regarding time devoted to instructional activities, playground supervision, clerical tasks, etc. The Paraprofessional Time and Activity Log (pages A-5 to A-7) is useful in record keeping and decision making.

Evaluation information should be shared in a conference with the paraprofessional. Topics of the conference often include strengths and weaknesses; areas in which improvement might be attempted; strategies for altering behavior; plans for needed inservice; and changes in assigned duties.

Conclusion

Paraprofessionals are an extremely valuable resource in meeting the educational needs of special education students. Important factors in the utilization of paraprofessionals include an adequate plan for administering the program, training for special education teachers and paraprofessionals, and evaluation of the program. Paraprofessionals

play an important role by providing an opportunity for differentiated staffing and thereby enabling more productive and efficient use of professionals. Paraprofessionals can provide important educational services, and should be valued by staff members, students, and the community as a whole.

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APPENDIX A-1

TEACHER AIDE EVALUATION FORM

Name _____ Room Served _____

Date _____ Evaluator _____

Instructions: Complete the following form on each instructional aide employed in the district. The rating scale of 1 to 5 is employed with 1 being low and 5 being high. Make narrative comments where they would be appropriate in evaluating the instructional aide. (NA refers to not applicable.)

	5	4	3	2	1	NA
I. Rapport/Interpersonal Skills						
1. Rapport with children in classroom	—	—	—	—	—	—
2. Communication with supervising teacher	—	—	—	—	—	—
3. Communication with other staff members	—	—	—	—	—	—
4. Communication with parents of children	—	—	—	—	—	—
II. Personal Characteristics						
1. Neatness and appropriateness of dress	—	—	—	—	—	—
2. Interest and enthusiasm for the job	—	—	—	—	—	—
3. Self-control in stress situations	—	—	—	—	—	—
4. Initiative and work habits	—	—	—	—	—	—
5. Friendliness and cooperativeness	—	—	—	—	—	—
III. Employment Performance						
1. General Assistance to the Teacher						
a. Attendance taking, etc.	—	—	—	—	—	—
b. Record keeping of student progress	—	—	—	—	—	—
c. General housekeeping of the room	—	—	—	—	—	—
d. _____	—	—	—	—	—	—
e. _____	—	—	—	—	—	—
2. Technical Assistance in Instruction						
a. Operation of AV equipment	—	—	—	—	—	—
b. Operation of duplication equipment/ typing	—	—	—	—	—	—
c. Bulletin board assistance	—	—	—	—	—	—
d. Preparation of instructional materials	—	—	—	—	—	—
e. _____	—	—	—	—	—	—
3. Instructional Assistance						
a. Individual tutoring skills	—	—	—	—	—	—
b. Group supervision						
i. small group (1-5)	—	—	—	—	—	—
ii. large group (5 or more)	—	—	—	—	—	—
c. Story telling or reading	—	—	—	—	—	—
d. Behavior management	—	—	—	—	—	—
e. Observation reports to the teacher	—	—	—	—	—	—
f. _____	—	—	—	—	—	—
g. _____	—	—	—	—	—	—
IV. General Observations						
1. Carries out all assigned responsibilities	—	—	—	—	—	—
2. Follows ethical procedures	—	—	—	—	—	—
3. Takes part in inservice opportunities	—	—	—	—	—	—
4. Punctual	—	—	—	—	—	—
5. Student learning contracts are carried out	—	—	—	—	—	—
6. _____	—	—	—	—	—	—
7. _____	—	—	—	—	—	—

APPENDIX A-2

OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Observee: _____ Date: _____

Time: _____ Activity: _____

Observer: _____

Instructions: Rate the paraprofessional on each of the following items by circling: (1) excellent; (2) very good; (3) average; (4) below average; (5) poor; and (6) no opportunity to observe.

Behavior with Student	Ratings					
1. Clear instructions to student	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. States expectations to student	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Tutoring is sequential	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Provides opportunities for response	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Use of prompts/stimulates responses	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Presents activity in reasonable time frame	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. Measures performance against objectives	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. Provides planned reinforcement in a timely and consistent manner	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. Utilizes body language appropriately	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. Control of the instructional session	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. Uses a variety of reinforcers	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. Uses materials effectively	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. Stays on task	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. Maintains records	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. Exhibits enthusiasm for task	1	2	3	4	5	6

Comments:

APPENDIX A-3

PARENT EVALUATION OF THE PARAPROFESSIONAL PROGRAM

Our school has employed teacher aides to assist in the instruction offered to your child. Would you please take a few minutes to give your reactions to the program by answering the following questions?

	Much 1	2	No Difference 3	4	Not at All 5
1. Is your child more enthusaistic about school?	1	2	3	4	5
2. Has she/he shown greater interest in her/his school work?	1	2	3	4	5
3. Has the teacher been able to give your child more individual help?	1	2	3	4	5
4. Does your child talk more about things that happen at school?	1	2	3	4	5
5. Has your child received individual help from the educational aide?	1	2	3	4	5
6. Have you visited the class or teacher?	1	2	3	4	5
7. Have you talked with the education aide?	1	2	3	4	5
8. Do you favor the continued use of the educational aide in the classroom?	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX A-4

PARAPROFESSIONAL SELF-RATING EVALUATION FORM

Instructions: The following items have been prepared so that you can indicate how you feel about your performance in relationship to each of the questions. For each item circle the letter which represents your reaction as to whether you Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), are Not Sure (N), Disagree (D), or Strongly Disagree (SD).

1.	Do I plan for the activity that I have been assigned?	SA	A	N	D	SD
2.	Do I make myself helpful by offering my services to the teacher when there is an obvious need for help?	SA	A	N	D	SD
3.	Do I have a plan for getting children into groups?	SA	A	N	D	SD
4.	Do I find opportunities for giving children choices, or do I tell them what to do?	SA	A	N	D	SD
5.	Do I observe closely the techniques used by the teacher and follow through when I am working with the group?	SA	A	N	D	SD
6.	Do I really listen to what children say?	SA	A	N	D	SD
7.	Do I accept criticisms and suggestions without becoming emotionally upset?	SA	A	N	D	SD
8.	Do I follow directions of the classroom teacher?	SA	A	N	D	SD
9.	Do I try to develop a friendly attitude with all of my co-workers?	SA	A	N	D	SD
10.	Do I give too much help to children rather than allowing them time to think?	SA	A	N	D	SD
11.	Do I refrain from interfering between another teacher and pupil unless called on for assistance?	SA	A	N	D	SD
12.	Do I avoid criticism of the children, the teacher, and the school?	SA	A	N	D	SD
13.	Do I maintain accurate and complete records of the activities of students with whom I work?	SA	A	N	D	SD
14.	Do I have an adequate knowledge of the school rules and policies governing my employment?	SA	A	N	D	SD
15.	Do I understand the discipline/student management procedures employed by my supervising teacher?	SA	A	N	D	SD
16.	Do I have sufficient knowledge of operating the audiovisual equipment and reproduction equipment?	SA	A	N	D	SD
17.	Do I know the procedures to follow in a school emergency, such as fire, and first aid?	SA	A	N	D	SD
18.	Do I dress in an appropriate manner commensurate with the expectations of the school?	SA	A	N	D	SD
19.	Do I use the proper school channels when I have a disagreement with a staff member?	SA	A	N	D	SD
20.	Do I feel that I am making a positive contribution to the education of students?	SA	A	N	D	SD

APPENDIX A-5

PARAPROFESSIONAL TIME AND ACTIVITY LOG

Directions:

The Time and Activity Log is designed to provide a measure of accountability for paraprofessionals as well as a means to determine whether the staff member is meeting the job or role description for a specific position.

The paraprofessional should record the specific number of times he/she has engaged in a particular activity in the upper half of the box under the date following the lettered activity code. Time should be recorded to the nearest 15-minute interval in the space in the lower half of the box. The time and activity rows should be totaled at the end of each month by placing the total in the total column.

Below is a categorization of activities commonly engaged in by paraprofessionals. The categories can be delimited or expanded dependent upon the needs of the individual.

A. *Administrator Conference.* Conference or discussion with the superintendent, principal, director of special education, curriculum coordinator, etc.

B. *Building, Classroom, and Equipment Maintenance.* Routine activities related to organizing or repairing equipment or furniture in the classroom.

C. *Classroom Observation of Students.* Observations focused on pupil behavior either collectively or singularly for purpose of assessment or procurement of information.

D. *Conference with Other Persons.* Including school counselor, psychologist, therapist, regular class teacher.

E. *Instructional Activities by Subject or Area:*

1. Tutoring One-to-One	6. _____	11. _____
2. Group Activities	7. _____	
3. _____	8. _____	
4. _____	9. _____	
5. _____	10. _____	

F. *Meeting or Inservice attended.* All meetings attended, such as building, training, or district-wide.

G. *Parent Conference.* All contacts with parents whether formal or informal.

H. *Playground, Lunchroom, Recess Supervision.* (Self-explanatory.)

I. *Preparation and Planning.* Time spent preparing instructional materials, bulletin boards.

J. *Record Keeping, Report Writing, and Letter Writing.* Reports or records for instructional staff.

K. *Typing and Reproducing Materials.* (Self-explanatory.)

L. *Student Conferences.* Small group and individual sessions with students relating to the academic program or adjusting behaviorally or socially.

M. *Teacher Conferences.* Conferences with supervising teacher.

N. *Testing and Evaluation.* Time devoted to testing and reporting student progress on measures given to assess student's entry level skills or progress.

O. *Other.* This category is available for use by the paraprofessional to report other specific assignments. These assignments should be spelled out very specifically.

PARAPROFESSIONAL DAILY ACTIVITY LOG AND CODE

ACTIVITY CODE	DAY	Total Event	Total Time
A. Administrator Conference			
B. Building, Classroom & Equipment Maintenance			
C. Classroom Observation of Students			
D. Conference with Other Persons			
E. Instructional Activities by Subject or Area and Average Number of Students Served: Code Name of Activity Number of Students			
1. Tutoring One-to-One			
2. Group Activities			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			
F. Meeting or Inservice Attended			
G. Parent Conference			
H. Playground, Lunchroom, Recess Supervision			
I. Preparation and Planning			
J. Record Keeping, Report Writing, and Letter Writing			

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MONTHLY SUMMARY

Month _____

Submitted by _____

Instructions:

Record the number of specific events for each activity in the upper half of the box under the date following the lettered activity code. Record the time in ten-minute blocks in the lower half of the box.

Example:

	DAY	6-12
A.		1
		10

The above example indicates that on June 12, one administrator conference of ten minutes or less was conducted.

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PARAPROFESSIONAL DAILY ACTIVITY LOG AND CODE (continued)

ACTIVITY CODE	Day	Total Event	Total Time
K. Typing and Reproducing Materials			
L. Student Conference			
M. Teacher Conference			
N. Testing and Evaluation			
O. Other			
1. _____			
2. _____			
3. _____			
4. _____			
5. _____			

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